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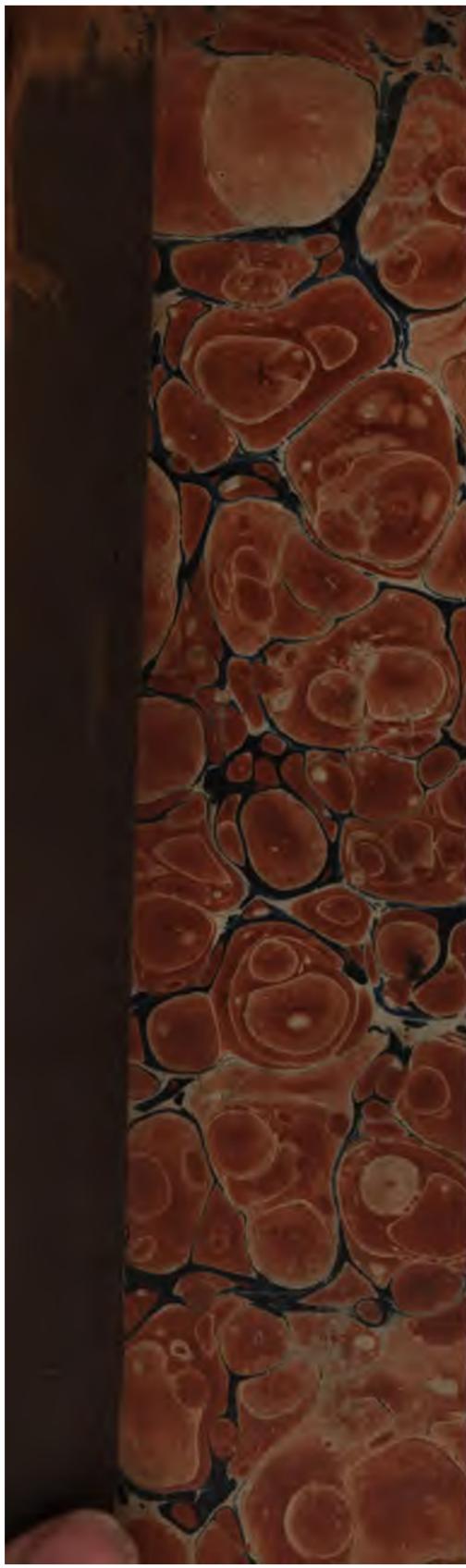
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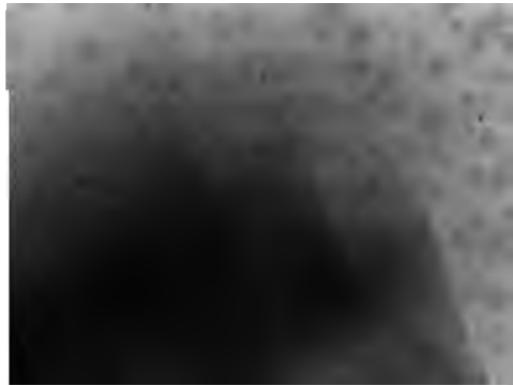
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APOLOGY FOR THE WALDENNESSE;

EXHIBITING
AN HISTORICAL VIEW
OF THEIR
ORIGIN, ORTHODOXY, LOYALTY, AND CONSTANCY:
TO WHICH IS ADDED,
AN APPEAL
TO SEVERAL
EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS ON THEIR BEHALF.



BY THE
REV. THOMAS SIMS, M.A.
DOMESTIC CHAPLAIN TO HER GRACE THE DUCHESS DOWAGER OF BEAUFORT.

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PREFACE.

WITHIN the last few years several Publications have appeared, relative to the Waldenses. The hereditary aversion of the Court of Rome, however, having recently discovered itself in the establishment of a Congregation of Jesuits in their neighbourhood, this Apology in behalf of the Waldenses has been deemed expedient, with a view to secure for them that degree of attention, and that continuance of friendly regard, on the part of European Potentates, which shall operate as a check to any covert designs which their enemies may foster. A timely exposure of those designs, and of their probable results, may impede the accomplishment of perilous purposes; especially when those who engage in them are aware that an "Apology" for that inoffensive people will be respectfully submitted—in the hope that it

will be graciously received—to those Princes who are regarded as their Patrons.

Amongst those Patrons they presume to include his Majesty the KING of ENGLAND, who, following the example of a late venerated Sovereign—George III.—has graciously listened to representations in their behalf, and become their benefactor.

The late lamented Emperor of Russia took a no less direct and lively interest in their welfare.

His Majesty the King of Prussia has been their distinguished Patron for many years.

It is humbly presumed also, that his Majesty Nicholas I. will, in conformity with the conduct of those illustrious relatives—the Brother whose throne he has inherited, and the Monarch whose Daughter he has espoused—descend to place himself amongst the protectors of that people.

His Majesty the King of the Netherlands, confirming and sanctioning the compassionate kindness of his subjects towards them, has also given a pledge of his personal regard.

His Majesty the King of Wirtemberg, and His Serene Highness the Prince of Hesse-Darmstadt, are Sovereigns in whose Dominions colonies of the Waldenses have existed for more than a century, and who have befriended those who now inhabit the valleys of Piedmont.

His Majesty the King of Sweden has also, by a recent act of kindness, added his name to the list of their Patrons.

To this brief enumeration of illustrious names, it may be subjoined, that to the Governments of several of the Swiss Cantons the Waldenses have been, both on former and later occasions, deeply indebted for the interposition and benefits which their situation required.

That they are still deserving, and may be soon in urgent need of, the protection of powerful Monarchs, it is the object of the following "Apology" to prove.

A hope, however, is ardently cherished, that the kindness of their lawful Sovereign—his Majesty the King of Sardinia—which has been

already conspicuous ; and the prudence of the Sovereign Pontiff, will so far control the minds and designs of their opponents, as to render any remonstrance or interposition of other Princes needless.

This “Apology,” then, is framed upon the ground of precaution, and prevention ; and as it does not emanate from the Waldenses themselves, but from an individual, honoured indeed with their friendship for the last twelve years, but now writing only as an observer of passing events ; and though watchful over their interests, not acting at their entreaty or request, they stand wholly exempt from responsibility and blame on account of the publication of this “Apology.” Whilst their own situation, however, may be so peculiar, as to preclude the propriety of a remonstrance from themselves as a Body, it is the more expedient that their friends in other countries should not be inattentive to their safety.

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AN APOLOGY,

&c.

A FEW months only have elapsed since a volume appeared in which it was remarked, "that Roman Catholics and Protestants should cherish sentiments of candour and forbearance towards each other; and that to inculcate such sentiments of mutual kindness, both for the honour of Christianity, and for the tranquillity of States, is become the more necessary, because many circumstances already indicate that a great discussion is at hand on all the leading questions that separate the Church of Rome from the Reformed Churches. The revival of the Order of Jesuits (it was observed) by the court of Rome, in opposition to the prevailing wish of other Roman Catholics; the attempt made by that highly-accomplished body of instructors to obtain a commanding influence in colleges and schools; the protest against their influence in France, and in support of the dignity of the crown, and the liberties of the

Gallican Church, by many distinguished individuals ; the generous determination of Roman Catholics in Germany and Ireland, to read the Holy Scriptures, notwithstanding recent decrees of the Vatican ; the resolutions of the South American States, by which the power of the Roman Pontiff is circumscribed, even whilst the Roman Catholic is the acknowledged religion of the state ; these, and other instances that might be mentioned, are not, like the hieroglyphics upon an obelisk, unintelligibly obscure, but ‘signs of the times,’ scarcely to be misunderstood ; a preface, it would appear, to extraordinary changes ; so many clear indications that a great crisis is approaching ; and that questions of overwhelming importance, relative to the nature of true religion, will inevitably soon arise, to disturb the slumber of those who indolently repose in error *.”

The ground
for this apo-
logy. I. Little was it imagined, when

the volume from which these words are extracted issued from the press in England, that a Decree, formed apparently from its contents to revive that theological discussion, had almost on the same

* “ An Historical Defence of the Waldenses,” by J. Rodolphe Peyran, published by Messrs. Rivington, Waterloo-Place.

day obtained the seal and final sanction of the Sovereign Pontiff at Rome. This Decree, or Brief*, dated September 1, 1826, authorizes the establishment of a new institution, to be denominated "The Congregation of the Blessed Virgin Mary;" whose members, secular priests, are to be named "Oblats of the Blessed Virgin Mary." The founders of the "Congregation" are two priests of Piedmont — Pie Bruno Lantero, and Jean Reynaudi; and the Decree for its establishment was granted by the Sovereign Pontiff at the request of the Bishop of Pinerolo, after having been examined and revised by his Eminence Cardinal Pacca. The chief and ostensible objects proposed to this new "Congregation," are, "the rendering assistance to Roman Catholic Clergymen in the reformation of their parishes, and preventing the evils likely to arise from the circulation of pernicious books."

If the objects of this "Congregation" were in reality as innocent and useful as they at first sight appear to be, it would have been needless to draw up this "Apology;" but since this "Congregation" takes the rule of St. Ignatius (Loyola) for its conduct,—and is consequently but

* See Appendix, No. I.

an institution of Jesuits under a new name,—and since it is evidently formed for the express purpose of inducing those worthy inhabitants of the valleys of Luzerna, La Perosa, and San Martino,—the Waldenses—to apostatize from the pure religion of their forefathers, and adopt the tenets of the Church of Rome, it is presumed that the following remarks on the Decree which has been thus sanctioned and promulgated, cannot be deemed unseasonable; especially, if, by exciting the attention of those Sovereigns, who are their acknowledged Patrons, the shield of their protection should be promptly and effectually interposed for the preservation of the Waldensian community.

II. Unwilling to attribute improper motives to those priests who are designated the founders of the "Congregation of Oblats," — Pie Bruno Lantero and Jean Reynaudi,—and who have thus offered themselves, as ready devotees and zealous missionaries, in support of the Roman Catholic Faith; the author of this "Apology" will not suppose that they are actuated by ambition, still less that they have any intentions connected with cruelty; but rather that zeal, in what they consider a good and holy cause; a wish to rescue those

Truth and
charity the
proper con-
comitants of
seal.

whom they sincerely believe to be in danger of eternal misery, has prompted them to engage in this enterprise. He will no less candidly admit, that a similar zeal and compassion may have induced the Bishop of Pinerolo to solicit, Cardinal Pacca to approve, and the Sovereign Pontiff to sanction this portentous Decree. This concession having been made, it may be remarked, in the first place, that zeal, in order to be pleasing to God and beneficial to men, must be ever under the guidance of charity; in which case it will display itself in the use of mild, not violent means; in persuasion, not persecution; and will wield that weapon which St. Paul recommends, "the sword of the Spirit;" the sword of God's word, not a sword of steel. In the next place, it may be observed, that charity, to be genuine, and wholly distinct from that blind compassion, which an adherence even to a superstitious creed may prompt the feeling heart to entertain, must have truth for its basis and support. As the injunction of the Apostle is, that we should maintain the truth in charity; Ἀληθεοντες ἐν ἀγάπῃ; so, according to the same Apostle, Η ἀγάπη συγχαίρει τὴν ἀληθείαν, charity rejoiceth in the truth, and of course should plead her cause only, not that of error. As the Waldenses, however, and their friends

believe, that they can prove by invincible arguments that truth is on their side, the missionaries denominated "Oblats of the Congregation," should be prepared to enter into an elaborate defence of the tenets of the Church of Rome, before they venture into the labyrinth of this great controversy.

Attached to the great principle of Religious Liberty, the author of this "Apology" would feel much regret if any European government were to forbid Roman Catholic priests to diffuse their opinions amongst Protestants, or Protestant ministers to reclaim Roman Catholics from what they deem error. Let none be fettered by restraints; let a fair field for discussion—for discussion in the mild and pacific spirit of the Gospel—be open to all; let no Protestant be persecuted for embracing the dogmas of the Church of Rome; let no Roman Catholic be tortured for preferring the doctrines of the Reformed Churches; but let the members of those different Christian denominations cherish reciprocal kindness and good-will, mutual forbearance and respect, and be ready upon every occasion to exercise good offices towards each other. Faithful to this principle, the writer would not invoke restrictions upon the Jesuits called Oblats, who, anxious to propa-

gate their opinions in the valleys of Piedmont, may attempt to persuade the Waldenses, by argument and exhortation, to become Roman Catholics; but on the same ground he would argue, that the Waldensian pastors ought to be allowed to propagate their opinions also, by the same fair means, amongst Roman Catholics; otherwise the transaction would bear the stamp of injustice. But, can so powerful and opulent a Church as the Church of Rome, be reluctant to grant the demands of justice to so weak and destitute a community as that of the Waldenses? Asserting that her doctrines are infallibly true, and an express echo to the will of God, does she dread the force of such arguments as a few pastors who reside in three sequestered Alpine valleys can adduce against her claims?

III. Conceding then, that the missionaries named Oblats, should not be restricted from preaching in the valleys of Piedmont; but contending that, in that case, the Waldensian pastors ought not to be restrained from preaching in Roman Catholic districts; their Apologist will not conceal the painful conviction which forces itself upon his mind, that in authorizing the establishment of a new order of missionaries to proselyte the Waldenses, the So-

Apprehensions of a new persecution.

vereign Pontiff has unhappily taken a most impolitic and dangerous step; a step which may not only be productive, in the end, of severe calamity to the Waldenses, but, in that event, of irreparable dishonour also to the Church of Rome. For, should the intemperate efforts of the Oblats introduce discord, with its long train of evils, into those peaceful valleys; should the neighbouring Roman Catholics be led to foster animosities, which have for some time past happily subsided; should those animosities terminate in such tragical scenes as the page of history has not only preserved from oblivion, but portrayed with heart-rending accuracy; then, not only will the sympathy and indignation of Protestants, but of all humane Roman Catholics throughout Europe, be re-awakened; ambassadors will hasten at the command of their respective Sovereigns, as on former occasions, and present the remonstrances of all enlightened cabinets at the court of Turin; a cloud, like that seen by the prophet, though at first as small as a man's hand, may thus gradually obscure the whole political hemisphere; a feverish excitement, arising from the principle of hatred, and pervading the mass of the people, may disturb, if not dissolve the relations of amity between States; whilst the unhallowed

contentions of those who call themselves disciples of the Gospel of peace, will but confirm unbelievers in their aversion to our common faith, and compel them to utter the too-just expressions of one of their most able and artful leaders * :—

. . . . Périsse à jamais l'affreuse politique
Qui prétend sur les coeurs un pouvoir despotique,
Qui veut, le fer en main, convertir les mortels,
Qui du sang hérétique arrose les autels,
Et suivant un faux zèle ou l'intérêt pour guides,
Ne sert un Dieu de paix que par des homicides !

But are not these visionary anticipations ? No ; they are probabilities grounded on the evidence of past events. The history of the particular people and district in question, too clearly demonstrates the danger incident to the enactment of such a decree as that sanctioned by His Holiness Leo XII. on the first of last September, and the perilous nature of all attempts to persuade the Waldenses to apostatize from the religion of their ancestors. To confirm this assertion, a series of instances in proof shall be now adduced.

* Voltaire, Henriade, Chant. II.

Those apprehensions justified by past history.

IV. Missionaries who had been sent into the valleys in the fifteenth century, complained to the archbishop of Turin, that the Waldenses did not conform to the practices of the Church of Rome; endeavoured to excite the displeasure of their Sovereign against them; and persuaded the inquisitor Aquapendente, and Compesio, archbishop of Turin, to publish a very severe edict, dated 28th November, 1475. In consequence of this, the pastor Jordan Tertian died a martyr at Susa, and Hypolite Rouzier, and Ugon Chiamp, martyrs at Turin.

Those missionaries having been very unsuccessful in their efforts to proselyte the Waldenses, Pope Innocent VIII. issued a bull in the year 1477, addressed to his nuncio Albert de Capitaneis, archdeacon of Cremona, in which he exhorted the clergy to preach a crusade for the extermination of the Waldenses, and promised plenary indulgence and remission of sins to those who would engage in this *unholy war*. Thus furnished with the authority of the Roman Pontiff, his nuncio assembled troops to the amount of 20,000, and attacked, but without the expected success, the unoffending Waldenses.

The danger likely to result from the recent establishment of a congregation of missionaries at Pinerolo, was likewise exemplified when, in the reign of Charles Emanuel I., three commissioners, the Count of Luzerna, Ponte, governor of Turin, and Archbishop Broglia, accompanied by monks and jesuits, enjoined the heads of families amongst the Waldenses resident in the towns of Campillon, Fenile, and Bubbiana, to attend mass, or leave their homes, under penalty of death and confiscation of goods for disobedience.

The danger attendant on such decrees and attempts, was still more fully evinced in 1650, when, after a deceitful calm, clouds began again to darken the horizon, and to menace some frightful catastrophe. His Holiness Pope Gregory XV. having in the year 1622, established at Rome the "Council for the propagation of the faith and extirpation of heretics," a council was also formed at Turin, including active devotees of both sexes, and patronized by the archbishop of that city, to carry the purposes of the "Propaganda" into effect. The misguided zeal of these devotees, and their bribes and menaces in order to make proselytes, were but a prelude to the cruel command of the auditor Gastaldo, which required the Waldenses of Luzerna, San Giovanni, La

Torre, and other places, to abandon their houses within three days, under penalty of death and confiscation of property should they remain, and refuse to attend mass. This severe injunction, issued during the winter, paved the way for the entrance of 15,000 troops in 1655, under the Marquis di Pianezza, whose cruelties, in the promiscuous massacre of women as well as men, and of the aged as well as children of tender years, were such, that ambassadors were despatched, without delay, from England, the United Provinces, and Switzerland, to present an earnest and pathetic appeal in favour of that suffering, yet innocent people.

From the statement of these facts, which I adduce, not with malicious exultation, but with reluctance and regret, it must appear evident, that the late moderator, M. Peyran, had too much reason for writing as follows in his fourth letter to Cardinal Pacca : “ Chaque siècle voit plus d'une fois renouveler ces scènes d'horreur; NOUVELLE MISSION, NOUVELLE SCÈNE DE SANG ET DE LARMES, qui nous fait voir tout ce que la barbarie peut inventer; des enfans arrachés du sein de leurs mères pour être démembrés; les corps empalés pour servir de croix sur les grands chemins.” . . . But I forbear to proceed with his description, since it

is not the object of this "Apology" to exasperate the minds of any persons by an enumeration of past atrocities towards the ancient Waldenses, but to preserve their living descendants from enduring a repetition of similar disasters.

V. A specious assertion, however, may be made to this effect :—“that the missionaries denominated Oblats aim at the conversion, not the destruction of the Waldensian community; that they intend to adopt no measures of cruelty against the Waldenses, but simply to induce them to embrace the doctrines of the church of Rome, to conform to her institutions, and acknowledge the supremacy of her pontiff, and thus render a submission on their part, which the dignity and honour of that church require.” In reply, their Apologist cannot but express the fullest conviction, that such efforts to proselyte the Waldenses will never have an issue favourable to the claims of the church of Rome; and that, so far from advancing, they will eventually derogate from her dignity. Such has been the actual result of repeated efforts for the last four hundred years; and can the present attempt be expected to be more successful? Will it be

Conversion of
the Waldenses
an unprofitable
triumph.

any satisfaction to the Bishop of Pinerolo, or to the Sovereign Pontiff, if those missionaries should overpower a few weak, illiterate minds in argument, and persuade them to forsake their early principles ? Will it be at all gratifying, if they should induce others, by bribes, to become hypocrites, and renounce a faith which their consciences compel them to believe true ? Will it be any source of consolation, if, by delivering other more faithful and honest Christians to the secular arm, they should thus add to the number of that illustrious company described by St. Ambrose in his " Te Deum :"—

“ Martyrum candidatus exercitus”

the white-robed army of martyrs ?

Let it be allowed, however, for the sake of argument, that the utmost wishes of the missionaries will be realized. Let it be granted, that an event never likely to occur will actually take place,—namely, that the whole, or the majority of the population, shall unanimously renounce their former principles, and adopt the religious practices prescribed to members of the church of Rome :—even such a triumph would be an unprofitable triumph to that church. For, is it possible, that an addition of 20,000 Pied-

montese mountaineers,—people who live, for the most part, in a state of extreme indigence,—could contribute either to the dignity or opulence of the Church of Rome? Would such an inconsiderable number form any valuable addition to the many millions who compose her members in Europe,—without reckoning her millions in the Trans-Atlantic States? Can a Church which reckons so many Crowned Heads and Mitred Prelates amongst her adherents, stand in need of the aid, the countenance, or the emolument to be derived from 20,000 rude inhabitants of three valleys in the Alps? This surely is incredible; and every Waldensian peasant, therefore, who has been told that the city of Rome boasts of a Pantheon now transformed into a Christian Church, a St. Peter's, the noblest structure in Christendom, and other numerous vestiges of her ancient as well as modern fame, may well feel the same surprise at such strenuous attempts to subdue his faith, as Caractacus is reported to have expressed, when, led as a captive to Rome, and surveying her splendid edifices, he exclaimed, “that he was astonished that those who could boast of such magnificence at home, should envy him a humble cottage in Britain.”

We may readily imagine, however, that, insignificant as would be the triumph gained by

the Church of Rome, in drawing the small Waldensian community within her pale, as it respects the acquisition of either wealth or honour, it may yet be deemed a triumph worth achieving, were it for this reason only, that the asserted antiquity and constant protest of the Waldenses have been generally esteemed powerful arguments against the dominion and pretensions of that Church. It appears to be expedient, therefore, to shew that neither the conversion nor extirpation of the Waldenses can now avail to support the claims of the Church of Rome, or to supplant the arguments of her antagonists. As some of her most strenuous advocates, however, deny the alleged antiquity of the Waldenses, that point shall first be substantiated by evidence not to be controverted.

Antiquity of the Waldenses. VI.. Some ill-informed, or ill-disposed persons have maintained, that the Waldenses are a sect of comparatively recent origin,—descendants of the followers of Peter Waldo, a merchant of Lyons, and celebrated lay-reformer, who flourished in the 12th century. Their late Moderator*, however, has shewn, by numerous and indisputable proofs, that they are lineal descendants of the

* Payran's "Historical Defence."

primitive and unadulterated Christian Church ; and should not be viewed in the light of separatists from the Church of Rome, since their ancestors never admitted those doctrines and practices which were introduced in later and darker ages, and which now constitute grounds of difference between the Church of Rome and other European Churches.

So far from supposing that they were followers of Peter Waldo, the Prior Marco Aurelio Roreno of Turin confessed, “Che della loro origine non si puo trovar certezza, e che nel nono e decimo secolo non era nuova setta,” —that their origin could not be exactly ascertained, and that they were not a new sect in the ninth and tenth century.

Belvidere, a missionary sent to the valleys, informed the Council “de Propagandâ,” that the valleys of Angrogna, (which is a central spot between the valleys, and was once the seat of their principal seminary,) were always inhabited in former ages by those whom he terms heretics,—“ Le valli di Angrogna sempre ed in ogni tempo hanno avuto heretici.”

An Archbishop of Turin, again—Claude Seyssel—declared, as early as the year 1547, “that after careful research he was unable to assign with precision a date to the antiquity

and origin of the sect of the Waldenses;" whilst Reynerus Sacco, a monk who wrote in the 13th century, affirms, "that their sect was by some said to have existed from the time of Pope Sylvester, whilst others traced it to as early a period as the Apostolic age."

Thus is their existence, at an era long prior to that of Peter Waldo, established by the concurrent testimony of their very adversaries.

The Waldenses the forerunners of the Reformers; and their faith similar.

VII. The antiquity of the Waldenses having been thus indisputably proved, we proceed at once to shew that the force of the argument furnished by the perpetual protest of so ancient a community against what they considered superstitious innovations, cannot be eluded even by the conversion or extirpation of the community itself. Every attempt to blunt the edge of that argument,—whether by the insidious means of perplexing sophistry and alluring bribes, or the more violent measure of persecution—must be futile; since it comes too late by many centuries to attain the wished-for result.

If the remarkable people, of whom a small distinct remnant still exists in Piedmont and elsewhere, had been effectually crushed when there were immense numbers of them, under the

various denominations of Waldenses, Albigen-ses, Picards, Lollards, &c. scattered over Eu-rope; if their literary and religious documents had been destroyed; if the nature of their protest against the Church of Rome had been concealed or misrepresented, and their very names almost obliterated from the annals of the world; then indeed it might have been more than difficult to substantiate the argu-ment drawn from the history of the Waldenses against the errors and innovations that have crept into the Church of Rome. But the case stands otherwise. The works of Claudio, con-secrated Bishop of Turin as early as the year 817, in whose diocese the Waldenses at that time resided, and whose doctrines they have preserved, are still in existence; the "Nobla Leyçon," and other ancient writings remain to attest their early faith; and that faith, as to its great leading features, remains, not merely amongst a few people in Piedmont, but in the authorized Confessions of the several Reformed Churches. The millions of Protestants, both in the Old World and the New, are, in a great measure, branches of that fruitful vine, the Waldensian Church, whose ramifications ex-tended, many centuries ago, into France, Eng-land, Germany, Belgium, Bohemia, and other countries. The Protestants of those countries,

partly descendants of the Albigenses, Lollards, Picards, &c. are at this day the inheritors and advocates of the faith of the Waldenses, or, which may be said with equal accuracy, of the Primitive and Apostolic Faith.

The inference from these facts is, that the apostasy of a few thousand inhabitants of the valleys of Piedmont, would avail nothing towards extricating the Church of Rome from the awful charge of having corrupted the Primitive Faith, whilst the millions who are members of the Reformed Churches—Churches that have returned to the principles of the Waldenses and of the first Christians—remain to assert it. Henceforward, then, let the Waldenses be left to enjoy the small luxury of peace, combined as it must be with great poverty, in their sequestered valleys. If those narrow defiles were once, in the eventful struggle for the dominion of Truth, what the pass of Thermopylæ was to Greece, they have long ceased to be the bulwarks of Christendom; and their inhabitants are scarcely worthy of the attention of those polemics who are prepared to defend the doctrines and the pretensions of the Church of Rome. It is not unreasonable, therefore, to propose, that the debate may be transferred from a secluded district in Piedmont to the ampler arena of

Europe in its whole extent. Let no sinister designs be formed, then, let no measures of cruelty be devised, at any future time, against the peaceable inhabitants of that district; but since their cause has been always strictly identified with that of all the Reformed Churches, and the members of those Churches are in the most absolute sense their debtors, indebted to them even as children are to a parent, let the strong and youthful progeny bear the burdens which may be at any time laid upon the venerable but feeble parent.

It is true, an able and intrepid champion for true religion appeared lately amongst the Waldenses. Their deceased Moderator and chief Pastor, addressed four letters to his Eminence Cardinal Pacca, the purport of which is to demonstrate the antiquity, and defend the doctrines of their Church. To the episcopal charge of the late Bishop of Pinerolo, Count François Bijex, now Archbishop of Chamberry, he also wrote a "Reply," the object of which is to prove that the Waldenses and the Reformed Churches have not violated Christian unity in their opposition to the assumed supremacy of the Church of Rome. But since the publication of these and other works of that learned Divine, in "An Historical Defence of the Waldenses," has already virtually removed the

scene of action from Piedmont to other countries, it is but a reasonable request that Roman Catholic Divines would now withdraw their attention from that obscure district, and endeavour to refute by fair argument, and in the temperate Christian spirit which that author displayed, his elaborate "Defence." Thus may that vital and paramount question, "What is Truth?" be discussed in the presence of the more intelligent classes of readers; of those who can best judge whether the Moderator's arguments or those of his antagonists preponderate; whilst an opportunity will be afforded to the combatants to appear, not for vain display, like knights of chivalry at a tournament, still less with ferocious zeal, like gladiators in an amphitheatre, but, with the admirable qualities extolled by the Apostle *,—"knowledge, long-suffering, kindness, love unfeigned, the Word of Truth, and the Armour of Righteousness on the right hand and on the left."

Having thus endeavoured to shew, that any attempt in modern times to proselyte the Waldenses cannot possibly avail towards sustaining the claims of the Church of Rome; their Apologist will next undertake to prove, that the presence of a body of missionaries, as in-

* 2 Cor. vi. 6, 7.

structors, is altogether unnecessary, because they already surpass their Roman Catholic neighbours, both in the solidity of their faith, and the excellence of their conduct.

VIII. With regard to their faith, it may be observed, that they have always entertained the highest respect for those inspired canonical books of the Old and New Testament, which are the purest fountains of religious knowledge. Indeed, their distinction between the canonical and apocryphal books, many centuries ago, was more accurate than that of Roman Catholic Theologians; for it corresponded with that of Rufinus, Presbyter of Aquileia, in the 5th century, who has given a most exact catalogue of the inspired canonical books; whilst Pope Innocent I. fell into the mistake of confounding them with those which are apocryphal. Whilst this circumstance speaks strongly in favour of the orthodoxy of the Waldenses, it is also a memorable proof, that in thus guarding from dilapidation, as well as heterogeneous addition, the very foundations of the fabric of Christianity, they have conferred an incalculable benefit, a benefit that should never be forgotten, upon the whole Christian world.

Orthodoxy of
the Waldenses.

The orthodoxy of their faith will still farther appear from the approval of several of the most valuable formularies adopted by the Roman and other Churches. Since, for instance, they used the creed denominated that of "the Apostles," their sentiments were evidently in unison with those of the primitive Catholic Church. As they approved of the Creed drawn up at the great Council of Nice, so far from being Arians, they coincided with the orthodox Catholic Church in that early age. Their reception of the Athanasian Creed still farther proves the orthodoxy of their principles; as does their occasional use of that sublime and devotional composition ascribed to St. Ambrose—the "Te Deum."

These proofs of the purity of the faith of the ancient and modern Waldenses, may be still farther corroborated by extracts from a Confession of their Faith, drawn up and approved as late as the year 1819; a Confession which corresponds, in all leading points, with the ancient Confessions of their own Church, and with those of the Reformed Churches. The following passages, selected from that Confession *,

* The whole of the Latin original and English translation, consisting of Thirty-two Articles, will be found in Peyran's "Historical Defence of the Waldenses," pp. 446—454.

will suffice to establish the point now contended for.

“ I. We believe (with respect to numerical unity) that God is one: and by this word we understand a spiritual, eternal, boundless, infinitely wise, merciful, and just,—in one word, a most perfect Being; and that in that simple Essence there are three Persons, or Hypostases, namely, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

“ VIII. We believe that man, who was created pure and holy, deprived himself through his own fault of the happiness allied to purity and holiness, by listening to the tempter, that is, the devil:

“ IX. That man by his transgression, lost the righteousness and holiness which he had received; and incurred, with the wrath of God, death, and captivity under the dominion of him who ‘ hath the power of death;’ so that our free will is in a fallen condition, and we are become ‘ the children of wrath,’ ‘ dead in sins;’ and are not able of ourselves, and without grace, to cherish a good thought;

“ X. That all the descendants of Adam are guilty of his disobedience, infected with corruption, and have fallen into the same calamity; whence that infection proceeds to which the fathers have given the name of original sin.

“ XIII. We believe that there are two natures in Christ, the divine and the human, truly in one sole person ; neither confounded, nor divided, nor separated, nor changed ; each nature preserving distinct properties ; and that Jesus Christ is very God and very man :

“ XIV. That ‘ God so loved the world ’ that he gave his Son to save us by his most perfect obedience,—especially that which he displayed by enduring the death of the cross ; and by the conquests he achieved over the devil, sin, and death :

“ XVI. That the Lord Jesus, when he had reconciled us to God by his blood, became our leader : and that we are not absolved and justified by our own works, but by his merit :

“ XVII. That we have fellowship with Christ, and participate in his benefits, by *faith*, which strives to obtain the promises of life which are offered to us in the Gospel :

“ XVIII. That this faith proceeds from the gratuitous operation of the Holy Spirit, who illuminates our souls, and induces them to place all their hopes in the divine mercy ; that we may impute to ourselves the merits of Christ ; and that we may most firmly believe, that without him we cannot be saved.

“ XXI. We believe good works to be so necessary to believers, that they cannot attain to

the kingdom of heaven without such good works, which God (it is most certain) ‘hath fore-ordained that we should walk in them;’ and, in like manner, that we should shun every vice, and cultivate all the virtues that Christ hath taught us.”

If these testimonies to the soundness of their faith are deemed ample, no less ample attestation may be adduced with reference to their morals.

IX. The Waldenses have wisely selected as one chief directory and rule of conduct, the commandments which God delivered to the children of Israel upon Mount Sinai; the obligation and authority of which our Saviour has confirmed in the New Testament. These commandments they receive without the least mutilation; every iota is preserved; and whilst, for purposes which can scarcely be misconceived, several specific and remarkable words of the commandment against the use of images are omitted in Roman Catholic Catechisms, the Waldenses, deeply imbued with reverence for the Almighty’s injunction, retain those words as found in the Book of Exodus, and thus rendered in the Vulgate, “*Non facies tibi scuptile neque omnem similitudinem quæ est in cælo desuper, et quæ in terra deorsum, nec*

Exemplary
conduct of the
Waldenses.

eorum quæ sunt in aquis sub terra. Non adorabis ea, neque coles," &c.

Conscientious in their regard to these commandments, the Waldenses have been in all ages distinguished for their exemplary conduct. The historian Thuanus* informs us, "that they detested unlawful oaths, perjury, quarrels, sedition, drunkenness, debauchery, sacrilege, robbery, usury," &c. and "that in time of war, when troops were quartered in the neighbourhood, even Roman Catholics entrusted their daughters to their care, that they might be safe from ill-treatment." So excellent, indeed, was their general conduct, that when Birague, Governor of Saluzzo, received orders to destroy them, at the era of the Bartholomew massacre, he, with the advice of the Archdeacon, and several ecclesiastics, begged to be allowed to spare the lives of persons so faithful to their Sovereign, and who lived on the best terms with their Roman Catholic neighbours.

To multiply proofs to the same effect can scarcely be deemed necessary; but, if their Apologist may be permitted to add his humble testimony, he can, from personal observation, assert, after having travelled for several weeks, by day and night, through the villages in the

* Lib. xxvii.

valleys, and the hamlets on the mountains, that the Waldenses are an industrious people, and a loyal people; peaceably disposed; attentive to their moral and religious duties; and amongst whom, not only may the stranger travel in perfect safety, but solitary Roman Catholic families dwell in lone cottages, uninjured, unmolested, whilst they tend their flocks on the sheep-walks of the Alps during the summer months. To this testimony, from ocular observation, he can also subjoin, upon highly respectable authority, that when the late emperor Napoleon banished two or three monks to the valley of Luzerna, as to a place of hard exile, so far from meeting with insult or unkind treatment, they were uniformly respected, as those in a state of adversity. Do not such a people deserve, in return, the respect of members of the Church of Rome, as well as other churches? May we not re-utter the exclamation of those Pagans who witnessed the kindness of the first disciples,—“ See how these Christians love one another?” Doubtless, Pagans themselves would be constrained to acknowledge the general good conduct of such Christians; nor could the candid and polished Pliny, who once resided in their vicinity, at Como, do otherwise, if he were now living, than repeat, in almost similar terms,

what he said of the manners of the Christians in Bithynia * :—“ Affirmabant autem hanc fuisse summam, vel culpæ suæ, vel erroris, quod essent soliti stato die ante lucem convenire, carmenque Christo quasi Deo dicere secum invicem: seque sacramento non in scelus aliquod obstringere, sed ne furta, ne latrocinia, ne adulteria committerent, ne fidem fallerent, ne depositum appellati abnegarent.”

Loyalty of the Waldenses. X. That such exemplary Christians should have gained the esteem and confidence of their Sovereigns, cannot well excite surprise. Evil-disposed counsellors have, indeed, often tried to infuse suspicions into the minds of the reigning Princes; and have artfully endeavoured to persuade them, that subjects who differed from their Monarch in religion, must be, of necessity, disloyal. The history of the Waldenses proves that such an accusation was groundless; since their steadfast allegiance to their Sovereigns may be looked to as a model, even by their Roman Catholic fellow-subjects. To confirm this assertion, I will again resort to authentic proof.

In the year 1686, Victor Amadeus, instigated by perfidious advisers, permitted scenes of cruelty to take place in the valleys over

* Letter to the Emperor Trajan.

which we now rather choose to throw a veil. In about twenty years afterwards, that Prince was compelled, by adverse events, to seek refuge amongst the people who had endured that severe persecution. The asylum that he sought, when driven from Turin by the army of Louis XIV., he found, in a cottage still standing in the village of Rora, till re-instated in his capital by the military achievements of Prince Eugene. Even before that period, Victor Amadeus had relented ; for when he granted a favourable edict, in the year 1694, he addressed the deputies of the Waldenses to this effect :—“ Vous n'avez qu'un Dieu et qu'un Prince à servir ; servez Dieu et votre Prince en toute conscience. D'autres ont été la cause de vos malheurs, mais si vous faites votre devoir je ferai le mien, et aussi long-tems que j'aurai un morceau de pain, vous en aurez votre part.”

Again, at the late eventful period of the French Revolution, the loyalty of the faithful Waldenses shone with its ancient and unabated lustre, until Napoleon had usurped the dominion of Piedmont ; and so justly sensible was the late King of Sardinia of their attachment, that he said to the governor of Pinerolo, Count di Crotti, in 1821 :—“ Je sais que je

suis aimé des Vaudois ; j'ai fait la guerre dans ces vallées ; j'ai demeuré quelque tems au milieu d'eux avec plaisir ; leur attachement m'étoit connu ; maintenant je suis charmé d'apprendre par vous que dans ces dernières circonstances ils n'ayent point démenti leur caractère."

Such has been, both in ancient and in modern days, their unshaken loyalty. If, then, the officious interference, and misguided zeal, of the new missionaries named "Oblats," should ever awaken the displeasure of their Prince, and the Court of Turin, against such faithful subjects, because they may be unwilling to renounce those religious principles which they have inherited from their forefathers for more than a thousand years, will not the conduct of those missionaries be culpable in a very high degree ? The words of eternal life, flowing from the lips of Christian teachers, ought, unquestionably, to resemble those streams, which, descending from the Alps, according to Virgil's beautiful description, distribute fertility by the process of irrigation :—

" *Et, cum exustus ager morientibus æstuat herbis,
Ecce, supercilio clivosi tramitis undam
Elicit ; illa cadens raucum per levia murmur
Saxa ciet, scatebrisque arentia temperat arva.*"

When combined, however, with religious fanaticism and political rancour, and accompanied by anathemas, those salutary words lose at once their character and their efficacy, and, producing as they often do, in a short space of time, a great variety of disasters, may be too justly compared to the autumnal tempests, and deluging rains, which the same poet so strikingly depicts :—

“ Sæpe ego, cum flavis messorem induceret arvis
Agricola, et fragili jam stringeret hordea culmo,
Omnia ventorum concurrere prælia vidi ;
Quæ gravidam latè segetem ab radicibus imis
Sublimè expulsam eruerent : ita turbine nigro
Ferret hiems culmumque levem stipulasque volantes.
Sæpe etiam immensum cœlo venit agmen aquarum,
Et foedam glomerant tempestatem imbribus atris
Collectæ ex alto nubes ; ruit arduus æther,
Et pluviâ ingenti sata læta boumque labores
Diluit

Let us hope, however, for the honour of humanity, and for the credit of the Roman Catholic religion itself, that no disastrous effects of unhallowed zeal will be ever again witnessed in Piedmont. How desirable, on the contrary, that the spirit of benevolence may pervade, and preside in all churches ! Then, however they may differ from each other on religious topics, and however strenuous

in inculcating their own sentiments, neither Roman Catholics, nor their opponents, will have reason to complain of the existence of that "malice" which, the holy Pontiff observes, in the decree of September 1, has been exhibited of late in some quarters against members of the Church of Rome.

Pernsal of the Scriptures by the Laity. XI. One peculiar office assigned to the missionaries by that decree, is, that of counteracting the circulation of books of a pernicious tendency. From an intimate acquaintance, however, with the interior of the habitations of the Waldenses, their Apologist can affirm, that books formed to corrupt the heart are amongst them of very rare occurrence, and scarcely to be found. "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" said our Divine Instructor. The many proofs already given of the general good conduct of the Waldenses, sufficiently indicate that their sources of instruction must be comparatively pure. And they are so. The catechisms taught their children, portray, with great precision, the nature of true religion, and the relative duties of life; whilst the Holy Scriptures, which, St. Paul informs, are "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness," are uniformly listened to as the authoritative and

unambiguous oracles of God. Thus, although there are many pernicious works in circulation in different countries; some calculated to diffuse the poisonous tenets of infidelity; others formed to corrupt the youthful mind by their immoral tendency; and a third class designed to depreciate the sublime piety enforced in the Gospel, and to recommend the more degrading practices of superstition; the Waldensian community are, happily, exempt from this fatal contagion; the books chiefly in use amongst them being the Sacred Records, or elementary books in unison with those Records.

It is true, the perusal of the Inspired Writings by the Laity, especially by the poor and children, has been often objected to by Roman Catholic divines; although sanctioned by the authority, not only of ancient fathers of the Church, but of St. Paul and of our Saviour himself. For our Saviour said to the multitude, not to the Jewish priests only, “Search the Scriptures *.” St. Paul commended the inhabitants of Berea, as “ more noble than those of Thessalonica, because they searched the Scriptures daily †.” St. Chrysostom exhorted his hearers “ to read the Scriptures

* St. John v.

† Acts xvii.

carefully in their own houses, since the Holy Spirit had so graciously formed and arranged them, that toll-gatherers, fishermen, tent-makers, shepherds, might be saved by these books; and the mechanic, the servant, the widow, and the illiterate person, might derive some degree of profit *." And, lastly, not to multiply, needlessly, proofs of the same import, St. Jerome, in his epistle to Læta, recommends the Psalms, the Gospels, and the Prophets, as far preferable for her daughter Paula's use than jewels and costly robes:—" Pro gemmis et serico Divinos Codices amet . . . Discat primò Psalterium, his se Canticis advocet . . . ad Evangelia transeat, nunquam expositura de manibus . . . mandet memoriae Prophetas . . . caveat omnia apocrypha."

Such decisions as these, in favour of the general perusal of the Scriptures,—decisions, some of them of high, and others of the highest authority, may well have weight, not only with the Waldenses, but with Roman Catholics also; and induce them, notwithstanding the prohibitions of those who wish to retard, rather than advance the progress of religious knowledge, to read for themselves those Sacred Oracles, which are at once the fountains

* Homil. iii. in Lazar.

of private happiness, and the foundation of the public weal ; of the former, because they afford direction in the day of prosperity, and consolation in that of adversity ; of the latter, because, so far from favouring insurrectionary movements, and attempts to disturb the tranquillity of States, their language to the subjects of every realm is, " Let every soul be submissive to the higher powers. . . . Pay tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, honour to whom honour, fear to whom fear. . . . Fear God, honour the King."

XII. Since the free access of the Laity to the Holy Scriptures, thus contended for, has been denied from time to time by the express authority of the Roman Pontiff,—an authority which the adherents of the Church of Rome presume to consider unlimited and supreme, in all ecclesiastical affairs ; and, consequently, precluding the right of private judgment, and all discussions relative to truth or error ;—it naturally falls within the province of this " Apology," to state some of the grounds on which the ancient and modern Waldenses have uniformly refused to acknowledge that supremacy which has been claimed for the Bishop of Rome over the Christian Church. Whether claimed in consequence of our Saviour's address to St. Peter,

Authority of
the Roman
Pontiff dis-
claimed.

or the Emperor Constantine's supposed grant, or the liberality of Pepin and Charlemagne, each and all of these imaginary sources of authority the Waldenses consider equally untenable, and alike inadequate to substantiate the claim.

Is it argued that the words to St. Peter,—thus rendered in the Vulgate, “ Tu es Petrus, et super hanc Petram ædificabo ecclesiam meam,”—imply, that supreme and universal dominion in the Church was delegated to St. Peter, and to the Bishops of Rome, as his successors? The Waldenses reply, in the first place, with St. Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers, that the great doctrine which St. Peter confessed,—not St. Peter in his own person—is the foundation of the Church;—“ Unum igitur hoc est immobile fundamentum, una hæc est felix fidei petra, Petri ore confessa, Tu es filius Dei vivi.” In the next place they answer, that St. Peter's episcopal residence at Rome, is an assertion and an assumption unsupported by adequate proof; resting partly on the discovery of an inscription on a statue, dedicated, it was imagined, to Simon Magus,—“ Simoni Deo sancto,”—whose power as a necromancer the Apostle Simon Peter, it is affirmed, came to Rome to resist; whereas subsequent discoveries indicate that the legend was, apparently, founded on an erroneous interpretation of an inscription to

Sanco, an obscure Sabine Deity mentioned by Ovid *.

But again, is it argued, that the Pope's unlimited sway over Christendom was established by the Emperor Constantine's donation to Silvester I. of "the perpetual sovereignty of Rome, Italy, and the Provinces of the West," when he removed the seat of empire to Constantinople? The Waldenses answer, in the first place, that although Pope Adrian I. refers to this false document, in the letter to Charlemagne, in which he stimulates that Monarch to a similar act of generosity; and although this fictitious deed has been enrolled amongst the Decrees of the Canon Law, its invalidity has been admitted by the more candid advocates of the Church of Rome; "whilst the Popes themselves (one historian remarks) have indulged a smile at the credulity of the vulgar." In the next place they may reply,—with a view to subvert the erroneous supposition, that the Bishops of Rome were entitled to temporal so-

* Fast. VI. The following inscriptions to this Deity are found in Gruter.

1. Sancto. Sanco.
Semoni. Deo. Fidio. Sacrum.
2. Semoni. Sanco. Deo. Fidio.
3. Sanco. Fidio. Semo. Patri.
4. Sanco, Deo. Patr. Reatin. Sacrum.

vereignty, or even ecclesiastical dominion, over Italy and the Western Provinces, in the first ages, — that the Roman Pontiff never possessed the sovereignty of even Rome itself, till Charlemagne permitted him to hold it as a duchy; and that the *ecclesiastical* dominion of the Bishop of Rome was confined within the ten Provinces of the Roman Diocese, comprising those suburbicary Churches which are assigned to his care by the sixth canon of the Council of Nice. In support of their defence of their own rights, and the rights of the Christian world, against the usurpation of the Church of Rome, they may refer likewise to the authentic list of the thirteen Dioceses,—containing about 120 Provinces—into which the Roman Empire was divided about the time of Arcadius and Honorius; by which it appears, that the Italick Diocese with its seven Provinces,—one of which provinces was that of the Cottian Alps, which included the valleys of Piedmont,— Britain, France, Germany, Spain, &c. although they had been subdued by the Roman arms, were exempt from the jurisdiction of the Roman Pontiff. With respect to the Church of Milan, in particular, whose Archbishop was Metropolitan of the ancient Waldenses, their living descendants may state, without fear of contradiction, that the rights

and independence of that Church were strongly urged as late as the eleventh century; since, when Pope Nicolas II. sent Peter Damian as his legate to introduce celibacy amongst the Clergy, the Archbishop Wido, and many of his clergy and people, contended for the ancient freedom of their Church, asserting, “*Non debere Ambrosianam ecclesiam Romanis legibus subjacere, nullumque judicandi vel disponendi jus Romano Pontifici in illa sede competere.*”

Lastly, is it argued, in support of the alleged supremacy of the Roman Pontiffs, that the later grants of Pepin and Charlemagne,—the grant of Pepin, when, in 755, he bestowed Ravenna upon Pope Stephen II.; and the grants of Charlemagne, when, upon overthrowing the kingdom of the Lombards, in 774, he enlarged the possessions of the papal throne; and when, in settling the affairs of Italy, he deprived the Senate of the remnant of its power, and invested the Pope with the Duchy of Rome;—is it argued that these grants are legitimate grounds of ecclesiastical dominion? The Waldenses have still a reply at hand. “Incontrovertible evidence exists (they may say) that these concessions of secular power did not include that supreme ecclesiastical dominion over Christendom, for which the champions of the Church of Rome contend. For,

did not Charlemagne summon the Council of Francfort, in 794, for the purpose of opposing the use of images, though sanctioned by pope Adrian and the second Nicene Council? Did not his son and successor, Louis le Debonaire, convene the Council of Paris, in 825, in which the Gallican Bishops condemned image-worship? Did he not even appoint his Chaplain, Claudio,—whose doctrines we have ever since maintained—Bishop of Turin, in order to counteract the same practice of using images, then rapidly extending itself in the West?"

In fact, the above three grants, by which the Exarchate of Ravenna, the temporal dominion of the Lombards, and the Duchy of Rome, constituted the Roman Pontiff a temporal prince, and entitled him to a triple crown—so far from furnishing reasons why the Waldenses, and other Christians, should acknowledge his universal supremacy as Christ's vicar, rather afford grounds for denying it, since they have been thought, by profound interpreters of Holy Writ, to designate the bishop of Rome as that "little horn," which, according to the prophet Daniel*, would arise amongst the ten horns, or kingdoms, into which the Roman empire would be divided; a horn "having eyes like

* Chap. vii.

the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things; which should pluck up three horns by the roots, and speak words against the Most High, and wear out the saints of the Most High, and thinks to change times and laws; but whose dominion should be only for a time, times, and the dividing of time," that is, for 1260 years*. Indeed, so far were holy men of former days from considering, that titles which have been since assumed, and an accession of additional splendour, were desirable, that they rather dreaded their introduction, lest the marks of the Anti-Christian apostasy, foretold by St. John, should accompany them. For this reason we find a venerable Pontiff, Gregory I. so offended with the title of "Ecumenical," or "Universal," which the bishop of Constantinople had assumed, and which was

* Time, or one year.....	360 days
Times, or two years	720
Dividing of time, or half a year	180
<hr/>	
	1260

This interpretation is confirmed by St. John, in the Apocalypse, where he denominates the same period forty-two months. That a day sometimes signifies a year, in the language of Prophecy, appears by the remarkable period of 70 weeks, in Daniel, that is, 490 years, which were to elapse before the first advent of the Messiah.

afterwards conceded to his Holiness, Pope Boniface III. in 606, by the emperor Phocas, that he wrote, in a strain of indignation, “*Quisquis se universalem sacerdotem vocat, vel vocari desiderat, in elatione suâ Antichristum præcurrit ;—in hâc ejus superbiâ, quid aliud nisi propinqua jam Antichristi esse tempora designatur * ?*”

Not less indignant was St. Hilary, when, anxious lest, because Arianism was countenanced at Court, people should suppose that those only were the true disciples who occupied the most splendid edifices, and that those were scarcely worthy to be called Christians who lived in mountainous and secluded districts, that holy exile and confessor exclaimed, “*Unum moneo, cavete Antichristum ; malè enim vos parietum amor cepit ; malè ecclesiam Christi in tectis ædificiisque veneramini ; malè sub his pacis nomen ingeritis. Anne ambiguum est in his Antichristum esse sessurum ? Montes mihi, et sylvæ, et lacus, et carceres, et voragini sunt tutiores. In his enim prophetæ, aut manentes, aut demersi, Dei Spiritu prophetabant.*”

The Waldenses witnesses against error. XIII. Yes, doubtless, the annals of the Church afford copious proofs, that the true servants of God have

* Greg. Epist. xxx et xxxiv.

been often wanderers "in deserts and in mountains, in dens and in caves of the earth," when witnesses against reigning errors. Such was the condition of Moses, when the magicians lived in splendour at the court of Pharaoh; such also that of Elijah, when the priests of Baal partook of the luxuries of Jezebel's table. These two Prophets appear to form the ground-work of that sublime allegory in the Apocalypse *, which represents members of the true Christian Church under the form of witnesses, bearing their testimony against prevailing corruptions. That the Waldenses are particularly, though not exclusively, entitled to that honourable appellation, may be satisfactorily shewn from their history. Driven as they were into desert places, and invested with the garb of misery, yet diffusing the light † of divine truth amidst the gloom of the dark ages; and flourishing, like olive trees, even upon rocky soils ‡, to supply the oil required for

* Rev. xi.

† The ancient official seal of the Waldensian Church represents a lamp, or candlestick, diffusing rays over a surrounding field of darkness, in which seven stars also appear.

‡ "Difficiles primū terræ, collesque maligni,

Tenuis ubi argilla, et dumosis calculus arvis,

Palladiā gaudent silvā vivacis olivæ."

Georg. Lib. ii.

the service of the sanctuary ; we may well be induced, with the concurrence of a host of commentators *, to consider the language of the beloved Apostle strikingly applicable to them—Οὗτοι εἰσιν αἱ δύο ἐλαῖαι καὶ αἱ δύο λυχνίαι αἱ ἐνώπιον τοῦ Κυρίου τῆς γῆς ἐστῶτες—“ These are the two olive-trees, and the two candlesticks which stand before the Lord of the earth.” Reiterated efforts have been made, in past ages, to eradicate these olive trees from their native soil ; but never without results equally to be deplored by their enemies and friends ; for, like the mysterious myrtle, which Æneas wished to pluck up, that its branches might be thrown upon the idolatrous altar he had reared, they have suffered violence from the hand of a fellow-countryman, and stained the ground on which they grew with gore ;—

“ Fortè fuit juxta tumulus, quo cornea summo
 Virgulta, et densis hastilibus horrida myrtus.
 Accessi, viridemque ab humo convellere sylvam
 Conatus, ramis tegerem ut frondentibus aras,
 Horrendum, et dictu video mirabile monstrum.
 Nam, qua prima solo ruptis radicibus arbos
 Vellitur, huic atro liquuntur sanguine guttæ,
 Et terram tabo maculant.....
 Tertia sed postquam majore hastilia nisu
 Aggredior, genibusque adversæ obliuetor arenæ ;

* See Appendix, No. II.

(Eloquar, an sileam ?) gemitus lacrymabilis: imo
 Auditur tumulo, et vox reddit a fertur ad aures:
 Quid miserum, Ænea, laceras? jam parce sepulto,
 Parce pias scelerare manus; non me tibi Troja
 Externum tulit
 Nam Polydorus ego".....

The allegory of the olive-trees is not the only one in the Apocalypse by which the true Christian Church is represented. There is another, that of a woman * ; "a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars;" who "brought forth a man-child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron;" and who, after parturition, "fled into the wilderness where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand, two hundred and three score days," or years. Express reference is made to this passage in Pope Leo XII.'s late decree of September 1, and his Holiness sanctions the application of the passage to the Blessed Virgin Mary in the following language,—" She is, to employ the words of St. Bernard, in the sermon of the twelve stars, she is the woman formerly promised by God to tread under foot the head of the old serpent, which laid snares for her, and endeav-

voured in vain to bite her heel." Such an explanation of the allegory, however, unquestionably includes two errors. The first is, the misapplication of a part of the book of Genesis. For, certainly, our Lord Jesus Christ, Emmanuel, the immaculate Son of the holy and highly-favoured Mary, not the Blessed Virgin herself, is the "seed of the woman;" who, although Satan was permitted to "bruise his heel," when he maliciously harassed him on earth, and instigated the Jews to procure his crucifixion, yet "bruised that serpent's head," when he "through death destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil," and gave full proof of the triumph he had achieved by his resurrection. And this interpretation, it may be remarked, is countenanced by the Septuagint, St. Cyprian, and St. Irenæus, not to mention later and very able critics, in opposition to the inferior authority of St. Bernard. Besides, St. Bernard's is but a partial and inadequate explanation of the allegory, a second error to be noticed. For, as St. John elsewhere * presents to our view a corrupt Church, under the image of a woman "drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus," and "sitting upon a scarlet-coloured beast having

* Rev. xvii.]

seven heads, (which are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth,) and ten horns ;” so, in the above passage, does he allude to the holy mother of our Lord as an appropriate emblem of that pure and Apostolic Church, (before represented as two witnesses) which should remain in a suffering and depressed condition during the calamitous period of 1260 years :—

“ Crown’d with twelve stars a woman I behold,
 Rob’d with the sun, the moon beneath her roll’d ;
 Ripe for the birth, she groan’d in labouring pangs :
 Lo, a new wonder ; with wide-yawning fangs
 A huge red dragon, eager to devour
 Her hapless offspring, in its natal hour !

• • • • •
 What means the vision ?—Soon it meets my search ;
 Rob’d with her heavenly sun I view the Church ;
 That twelve-fold crown, her Apostolic wreath ;
 She leaves the low sublunar world beneath.

• • • • •
 But see the woman, to the desert fled :
 There in her place appointed to be fed
 (E’en as that raven-nurtured Seer of yore)
 Prophetic days, twelve hundred and three score :
 So, with her rescued Moses, Israel fled
 Erst to the desert, there divinely fed ;
 So fled the Virgin with her holy child,
 From Herod’s murderous ire to Egypt’s wild *.

• “ The Visions of Patmos,” a prophetic Poem, illustrative of the Apocalypse, by the Rev. Thomas Grinfield, M.A.

Adoration of
the Blessed
Virgin Mary
unauthorised
by Scripture.

XIV. Whilst St. John thus alludes to the holy Virgin as an emblem of the true Church, we do not find that he represents her,—even in that Sacred Book which so frequently describes the nature of spiritual and acceptable worship,—as an object of adoration. His Holiness Pope Leo XII. has, in his late Decree, strictly enjoined the missionaries about to be established at Pinerolo, to obtain her aid in their religious engagements by constant supplication to the mother of our Lord. The prescribed "Litany of the Holy Virgin," also, in express terms, instructs those who adopt it, to address themselves to her as—

"Sedes Sapientiae,
Turris Davidica,
Janua Celi,
Stella Matutina,
Salus Infirmorum,
Refugium Peccatorum,
Auxilium Christianorum," &c.

Since it is not intimated, however, in any part of the Sacred Volume, that such adoration is pleasing to, or required by the Almighty, the Waldenses, let us hope, will not be again

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subjected to persecution, if with primitive Christians, and members of the Reformed Churches,—between whom their ancestors constituted an indissoluble link of union,—they reserve those high titles and attributes for their Saviour; and, preferring admiration in this instance to adoration, adhere to the well-expressed maxims of St. Augustine* respecting departed saints, “*Honoramus eos charitate, non servitute,*”—“*Honorandi sunt propter imitationem, non adorandi propter religionem.*”

XV. At the close of this “*Apology*” for an innocent and worthy people, that Appeal which the very critical circumstances in which they are placed seems to demand, is now made, in humble and respectful terms, to those illustrious Sovereigns who have either befriended them in person, or whose predecessors have been their generous benefactors.

The people for whom,—as far as relations of amity between their sovereign, the King of Sardinia, and other courts will permit,—the benevolent interference and friendly protection of other monarchs is now solicited, were once a numerous as well as distinct people, under various appellations, but chiefly under the

A final Appeal
grounded on
the above Apo-
logy.

* “*De verâ Religione,*” cap. iv.

denomination of Waldenses; and — known throughout Europe. With respect to them, however, the language of Tertullian in reference to the first Christians may be painfully reversed. “ Externi,” or, “ Hesterni sumus, (said that ancient author,) et vestra omnia implevimus,—urbes, insulas, castella, municipia, conciliabula, castra ipsa.” The Waldenses, on the other hand, are not “ of yesterday,” but of remote antiquity; and they once “ filled cities and camps;” but they now reside, for the most part, in a few bleak and scattered hamlets on the Alps. It were easy to state by what means they are so reduced in number and consequence; but it is not the object of this “ Apology” to re-open wounds which have been almost healed, or to embitter the feelings by a wilfully-irritating recurrence to past events. With those anxious apprehensions which the tenor of the late ominous Decree is calculated to infuse, let the hope be rather cherished, that,—influenced alike by feelings of humanity, and instructed by the lessons of God’s holy word,—members of the Church of Rome, and Christians of every other Church, will adopt and act upon the noble sentiment of Lactantius,—“ Longè diversa sunt carnificina et pietas, nec potest aut veritas cum vi, aut justitia cum crudelitate conjungi.”

Whilst the diffusion of so pacific and truly Christian a disposition amongst the several classes of their own subjects, must obviously depend, in a great degree, upon the illustrious example, as well as influence, of crowned heads; by whom encouragement may be given to the moderate and tolerant, and withheld from the factious and fanatical; the prevalence of such a disposition, at the court and in the provinces of His Majesty the King of Sardinia, is essential to the welfare of his faithful subjects the Waldenses. To those great monarchs, therefore, who are the acknowledged patrons of that small community; a community whose wants and worth have deservedly excited their commiseration; an earnest and pathetic Appeal is now made, that they would condescend to regard their interests; interpose, in a friendly and efficacious manner with the Sardinian government, for their preservation from any present or future dangers to which they may be exposed;—and give express charge to their ambassadors and envoys at the court of Turin, to keep a vigilant eye upon the proceedings of the Oblats of Pinerolo, lest those proceedings should lead to calamitous results.

It is, indeed, but reasonable that His Majesty the King of Sardinia, and other Roman Catholic sovereigns, should pay deference to

the representations of the other monarchs, their allies; since to them, and to the achievements of their armies, they stand indebted, under Divine Providence, for restoration to their thrones. To Great Britain, in particular, which was an ark of safety during the storms of the revolution, the Clergy of France are under the deepest obligations, for the humane protection and liberal support afforded to them, when the flood of jacobinism and infidelity compelled them to become emigrants from their native soil. Can the large debt of gratitude thus contracted, be more honourably repaid, than by suffering those inoffensive subjects of the King of Sardinia, and the several communities which exist but as the minority of the population in different Roman Catholic kingdoms, to enjoy their political, but, especially, their religious privileges, unmolested? The honour of Roman Catholic princes seems, in fact, pledged to avert those dangers, whether near or remote, to which the imprudence and excesses of zealots, ever disposed to connect violence with argument, and to inflict misery upon those whom they are not able to convince, might expose any of their subjects.

Whilst this Appeal is thus more immediately addressed to the great monarchs of

Europe, the Sovereign Pontiff himself may not unreasonably be entreated, likewise, to become the protector of an inoffensive people, who may otherwise become the victims of the emissaries who act under his auspices. It was the prompt and earnest intercession of the late Waldensian moderator that saved the small town of La Perosa, wholly occupied by Roman Catholics, from destruction by fire, at the command of a French general. Touched by such an act of genuine humanity and pure religion, let us hope that His Holiness the Pope, whom the late Bishop of Pinerolo designated "*Souverain Modérateur de la discipline générale dans toutes les églises,*" will as humanely extend the arm of protection on behalf of the small community in the valleys of Piedmont, against the violence of party-zeal. There are in Germany, France, and other countries, great numbers of Roman Catholics, who cherish sentiments of kindness and moderation; who can appreciate real virtue, when it appears in Christians of other denominations; and who dread those consequences of an unbridled and fanatical zeal, which, whilst destructive of the happiness of their fellow-creatures, would bring a fresh stain and reproach upon the Church of Rome. It will be honourable to His Holiness Leo XII.,

56 AN APOLOGY FOR THE WALDENSES.

and to his successors, if the weight of their high authority should henceforth be thrown into the scale of those moderate Roman Catholics, and their countenance withdrawn from the designing and ambitious ; nor can this " Apology " be closed in more appropriate language, than that in which the deceased moderator, who has been already so often mentioned, expressed the following pathetic wish :—“ Fasse le Souverain Pasteur et l' Evêque de nos âmes, que les Pontifes de Rome moderne, instruits à l'école de l'adversité, revêtent les sentimens d'humanité, de support, et de tolérance, dont jamais leurs Prédecesseurs n'auraient dû s'écartier.”

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX, No. I.

IN the "Morning Herald," dated Dec. 9, 1826, appeared the following Decree of His Holiness Leo XII., translated from the "Etoile," dated Dec. 7.

Rome, Nov. 22.—Apostolic Letters in the form of a Brief, approving and confirming the rules of the congregation called that of the secular priests (*Oblats*) of the Blessed Virgin Mary :—

" Leo XII. ad perpetuam rei memoriam,

" Though the Son of God permits that his Church, which he has acquired at the expense of his blood, shall be sometimes agitated by the waves, so that we are forced to cry, ' Oh Lord, save us,' as was formerly done when we walked upon the waters, by St. Peter, whose chair we fill, though with merits so different ; we know, however, by the promise made to Peter, by the same Son of God, that the gates of hell shall never prevail against this Church. In truth, the world, especially now, is entirely given up to malice ; but he who chose his Apostles from among the world, in order that they might be the salt of the earth and the light of the world, has never ceased, and will not cease, successively to send labourers to his vineyard ; and as he causes such to arise at different times, he has mercifully deigned to raise up, even in our days, courageous men to

nourish the people with wholesome doctrine, and to dispel the errors of those who are in the darkness and the shadow of death.

" Among these men, our dear sons, Pie Bruno Lantero and Jean Reynaudi, priests of Piedmont, appear worthy to hold a place. Having joined with other associates, they have, for some years past, formed the very salutary design of devoting themselves entirely to augment the establishments of the Clergy, and to evangelize the people. The great fruit with which the Divine mercy has hitherto been pleased to recompense their efforts, could not remain long unknown; and several Bishops have required them to procure so powerful assistance to their flocks. Excited more and more by their celestial benedictions to prosecute and finish their work, these priests have applied themselves with new zeal to labour for its perfection, and to procure the salvation of souls. Lastly, our dear son, Pie Bruno Lantero, has come to Rome with another priest, Joseph Pogger, to ask of the Apostolic See, as well in his own name as in that of the other founder, Jean Reynaudi, and of all the associates, the confirmation of the rules and constitutions which they have thought fit to prescribe to the new congregation.

" Now the title of the new Society, as it has been chosen by the above-mentioned priests, is that of the Congregation of the *Oblats* of the Blessed Virgin Mary. By the rules and constitutions, there are four simple and perpetual vows;—those of chastity, poverty, and obedience; and also of perseverance in the Institute;—vows which are to be pronounced by the candidates, and from which they can be dispensed by the chief of the congregation, whom they call the Rector Major, or

by the Sovereign Pontiff. More strongly to maintain the Institute in obedience to the Apostolic See, the associates have chosen St. Peter for their special protector, and have added this clause, that every year, on the day of the fête of the Prince of the Apostles, all the candidates shall make their profession of faith, and shall promise true obedience to the Roman Pontiff, according to the form prescribed by our Predecessor, Pius IV.

“ This design must be the more agreeable to us, as a violent war is now declared, by men full of malice, and who commit iniquity against this Apostolic Chair, the true supreme mistress of the faith, and consequently against St. Peter himself, since, as Chrysologus said, ‘The blessed Peter, who lives and presides over this see, gives to those who seek it the truth of the faith.’ Now this congregation, by its constitutional rules, tends to make all the associates form, by strict ties, a single body; furnishes, in particular, assistance to the Clergy, either for the reception of orders, or the care of souls; that they may show themselves always disposed to labour for the reformation of the people, principally by spiritual exercises in public and private, according to the method proposed by St. Ignatius, and approved by our predecessor, Paul III.; and that to prevent the great evils, which we fear to see result from the deluge of bad books, which inundate almost the whole universe, they may labour to favour the reading of books of sound doctrine, to disseminate and spread them.

“ Though we did not doubt that such an institution would honour and efficaciously succour the Church in the afflicting state in which she now is, we have nevertheless thought fit to name a special congregation of some of our venerable brethren, the Cardinals of our

holy Church, taken from the congregation charged with the affairs and consultations of the Bishops and regulars, who, with the secretary of the same academy, should carefully examine the institution, its constitutions, and its rules, and should make on this subject a decree, which should be laid before us. This special congregation, after having carefully weighed every thing, was of opinion, and decreed on the 15th of July of the present year, that we should be requested to approve the institution and its rules, after some corrections and amendments had been made in them, according to the manner

“ These amendments and corrections having been already communicated, the Decree was laid before us on the 22d of August, by our venerable brother Bartellemi Pacca, Bishop of Porto and St. Rufine, Cardinal of the Roman Church, Prefect of the same congregation, and, in the plenitude of our apostolic power, we have resolved to approve it in every particular. Praising, therefore, as is fitting, the above-mentioned Pie Bruno Lantero, and Jean Reynaudi, who first undertook this work, and do not cease to labour in it to our great satisfaction, and declaring them, and the others whom our letters concern, absolved from all letters of excommunication, and interdict, and other ecclesiastical censures and penalties, if they had incurred them; yielding to their urgent entreaties, and having regard to the request of our venerable brother, the Bishop of Pignerol, and to the good offices of our good son in Jesus Christ, Charles Felix, the pious King of Sardinia, in whose states this institution had its origin, we voluntarily confirm it by our Apostolic power, and allow it to take the name of the Congregation of the blessed Virgin Mary.

" Besides, we approve its rules and constitutions ; and our will is that they be strictly observed by those persons who are received and shall be received into this congregation, whatever may be the functions that they hold. As for the defects of law and of fact, as they are called, which may have crept into the expressions of their constitutions and rules, we make them good by our authority. Lastly, we exhort and pray the said Pie Bruno Lantero, and Jean Reynaudi, and their associates, never to leave the feet of Mary, since they have formed themselves into a congregation, under her name. By this it will be permitted to hope still more, that supported by her aid they will produce abundant fruits. She is, to employ the words of St. Bernard, in the Sermon of the Twelve Stars, ' She is the woman formerly promised by God to tread under foot the head of the old serpent which laid snares for her, and endeavoured in vain to bite her heel. She alone has triumphed over the malice of heresy.'

" We order it thus, it being our will that these letters shall be durable.

(The remainder is according to the usual form.)

" Given at Rome, near the Church of St. Peter, under the seal of the fisherman, the 1st of September, 1826, the 3d year of our pontificate.

" (Signed) J., CARDINAL ALBANI."

APPENDIX, No. II.

DR. DODDRIDGE, commenting on Rev. xi. remarks, that “the learned Bishop Lloyd” considered “the Waldenses and Albigenses” as the witnesses in St. John’s Revelation; and, in reference to the prophecy in the eleventh verse of that chapter, adds, “The above-mentioned Bishop Lloyd imagined that it was fulfilled in the slaughter of the Albigenses and Waldenses in the year 1686: and that they arose in 1690.”

Bishop Newton, in his Dissertation on Rev. xi. observes, (after enumerating other witnesses against the errors of the Church of Rome), “But the true witnesses, and, as I may say, the Protestants of this age, (the twelfth century) were the Waldenses and Albigenses, who began to be famous at this time, and being dispersed into various places, were distinguished by various appellations.” The subject is alluded to at greater length in an Appendix to Peyran’s “Historical Defence of the Waldenses,” pp. 505—512.

FINIS.





